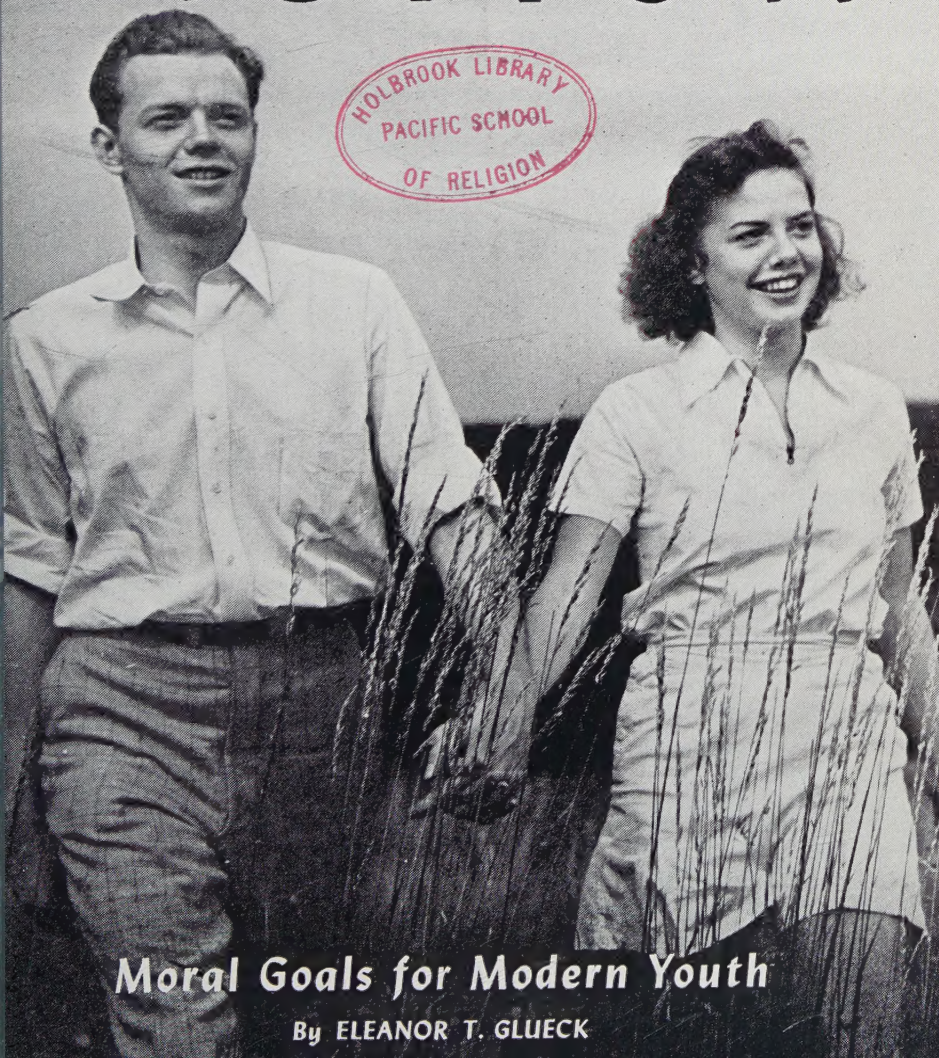
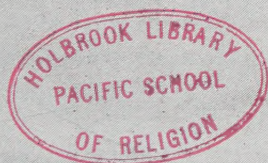


# SOCIAL ACTION



**Moral Goals for Modern Youth**

By ELEANOR T. GLUECK

# SOCIAL ACTION

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# A TIME FOR ACTION

BY CHARLES P. TAFT

The records of juvenile courts and social agencies, and venereal disease rates indicate that many of our young people are not morally prepared and protected to withstand the temptations which beset them in wartime. Insofar as this is true it is an indictment not so much of the youth themselves as of the generation which has failed to provide this preparation and protection.

This report by Mrs. Glueck on the results of a Seminar called to analyze the Standards of Youth in Wartime provides direction for thought and action on this problem. It takes advantage of the bright light of a national emergency to bring into focus the various aspects of the problem and resources for dealing with it.

The Seminar brought together the thinking of a group competent to appraise the problem from different angles. Each contributor is qualified by first-hand study in his or her specialized field. Because they have studied and dealt with the problems of youth as psychologists, teachers, social workers, parents, or ministers, their approach is clinical and not theoretical.

The principles and programs set forth in Mrs. Glueck's analysis of this Seminar provide an excellent guide to those of us in the fields of health and welfare, not only for dealing with our present problems but also for a long-time educational approach to the strengthening of our basic social unit, the family.

Had this Seminar met at the time of the last war and its principles been accepted and acted upon by parents, health agencies, adult education leaders, schools, social agencies and the like, the task now confronting us would doubtless have been a much simpler one. But may it be said to the everlasting credit of this group of experts that they kept ever before them in their long-term planning of principles and programs, the immediate needs of the present crisis, and gave to those of us concerned with these immediate needs specific suggestions which call for action now.

LONDON, FEB. 26—Adding his voice to steadily rising clamor for something to be done to combat social disease—a subject hitherto discussed here only behind closed doors—William Temple, the Archbishop of Canterbury, criticized the church as well as the government for failing properly to tackle the problem, which, he said, was fundamentally a moral one.

Addressing the Central Council for Health Education, the primate, as the Council's president, charged that government officials had ignored the moral principle underlying the subject of social disease and said that the British Army instructions were such that they gave rise to the *implication* that the authorities expected a considerable number of people to ignore moral standards.

"The root of the trouble," the Archbishop said, "is the treatment of what is primarily a moral problem as if it were primarily a medical problem. What is primarily a moral problem with a medical aspect is being treated as if it were primarily a medical problem with a moral aspect.

"There is a great evil and menace to be met. Let me, on behalf of the church, publicly acknowledge the great sin of omission. If we criticize the government for tackling matter in what we think is a wrong way, we must acknowledge our own failure hitherto to tackle it the right way."

—*New York Times*  
February 28, 1943

THE Archbishop of Canterbury's statement appeared just as this issue of SOCIAL ACTION was going to press, and provides a striking example of the universality of all human problems.

The church is potentially an originating source of inspiration and idealism. Moral problems arise within the individual's consciousness, and moral goals are established inwardly, before they appear in outward life as difficulties to be mastered and as aims to be attained. In dealing with young people the church has a primary responsibility for helping to create an inner climate in which the highest standards can take root and grow. But it has also a responsibility for seeing to it that the whole social environment encourages and does not blight or destroy the moral growth within each person's soul. In the last analysis, there is no difference between an attack upon the evil that develops in the mind and will and that which shows itself in physical disease and anti-social behavior. The church is concerned with the ravages of both.

Health, welfare, social hygiene, recreation and education in the fine art of living are all a part of the church's business because they contribute to spiritual development and ethical maturity. In modern society many of the actual functions connected with this total task are placed in the hands of so-called "secular" agencies. But the church should never seek to divest itself of responsibility for making certain that these specialized functions are rightly performed, and cannot do this unless it is aware of how all the other agencies in the community dealing with human problems are functioning, and is cooperating with them.

The pathway to moral goals is a many-way passage. And the church, more than any other institution, should know its way upon them all. Youth turns naturally to the church when it is sure that in travelling the hard but thrilling road toward spiritual maturity, it may receive sympathetic understanding and invigorating fellowship.

—D. J. B.



# MORAL GOALS FOR MODERN YOUTH

BY ELEANOR T. GLUECK

Since the last war and perhaps even since the days of the Pilgrim fathers, the older generation of Americans has been critical of the morals of younger people. In the general lament at changing standards, however, parents and youth leaders have not accepted their share of responsibility for these changes. They can no longer neglect to do so. For unless we can help modern young people to seek moral goals which will, in the present crisis, seem valid to them, the well-being of the next generation will be greatly impaired.

Are our young people ready to meet the problems of sex morality that face them in a world at war? Given the vast new knowledge of methods for safeguarding themselves from venereal infection and extra-marital parenthood, together with the wartime hysteria that throws inhibition to the winds and causes even the adult community to excuse such failings more readily than it would in normal times, what, except great self-discipline, a strong idealism, and a desire to uphold the highest standards of family life, is to prevent young people from succumbing to easy temptation? The opportunities for lax behavior are legion, and irresponsibility is encouraged by the automobile, the roadhouse, the tourist-camp, the cheap hotel and the rooming house. Our task is to recognize that the situation is serious and to set in motion every means of meeting it with imagination and courage.

The deep psychological effects of total war on a domestic pattern already blurred by the stress and strain of the past quarter century can hardly be overemphasized. Any program designed to cope with the urgency of the problem must not only take into account the immediate need for finding all reasonable means to assist young people in dealing creatively with their erotic impulses, but also—and this is more basic—must give

them an understanding of the positive principles underlying a successful home, so that they will grasp the necessity for avoiding the destructive use of their emotional drives.

In an effort to draft the resources for meeting this problem, the writer organized a Seminar at the 1942 Harvard Summer School on the subject of *Youth Standards in Wartime*. This Seminar was carried out in cooperation with the Division of Child Hygiene of the Massachusetts State Department of Public Health. It was a joint enterprise, not only because of this fact, but through the participation on an advisory committee<sup>1</sup> and in the Seminar itself, of representatives of many social agencies, in and around Boston, interested in youth problems. The advisory group, although recognizing that the wartime situation is enhancing the difficulties of young people in coping with their more intimate problems, realized that shifting behavior standards are not to be attributed to the war stress alone but also have their basis in social changes and pressures that have been taking place in American culture for many years, particularly since World War I. Nevertheless, the war period provides the psychological moment for a frank discussion of the situation.

The Seminar was undertaken, first, in the hope that a clearer understanding of the reasons underlying the growth of irresponsibility in sexual relations might be reached and secondly, to establish the principles that should underlie a long-time educational approach to coping with the problem.

Although there is evidence on every hand that behavior

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1. Dr. Florence McKay, Acting Director, Division of Child Hygiene, Massachusetts State Department of Public Health; Mrs. T. Grafton Abbott, Consultant in Parent Education, Division of Child Hygiene, Massachusetts State Department of Public Health; Mrs. DeForest Anthony, Lay Leader in Parent Education under the auspices of the Division of Child Hygiene, Massachusetts State Department of Public Health; Mr. Richard H. Anthony, Field Representative, Massachusetts Society for Social Hygiene; Dr. Augusta Bronner, Consulting Director, Judge Baker, Guidance Center, Boston; Mrs. Robert F. Herrick, Chairman, Protective Committee, Women's Civic Federation of Massachusetts; Dr. Jean C. Mendenhall, Lecturer on Marriage and Family Relationships at Boston University; Dr. Helen I. D. McGillicuddy, Lecturer, Massachusetts Society for Social Hygiene; Miss Grace Willis, Director-in-charge, Lincoln House, Boston; Miss Rona Brown, Greater Boston Community Fund; Dr. James C. Janney of the Marriage Consultation Center, Boston; and Rev. Howard P. Kellett, Director of Social Service, Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.



standards have long been undergoing change, particularly since the last war, and although literature is available which shows the contrast between attitudes about sex morals in the early 1920's and at the present time, it was deemed unwise by the group planning the Seminar to press home this evidence because there is still so much resistance to accepting it.<sup>2</sup>

The point of departure for the Seminar discussions, as has already been suggested, was the assumption that shifting moral standards are not the result of the war but are being enhanced by it and represent the crest of a tidal wave which has been swelling for the past few decades. It was also recognized at the outset that, in the very services which young people give to the war effort, their every fibre is being toughened and they are learning to impose restraints upon themselves which would have been difficult in peacetime. Some of them are quick to learn the lesson of accepting immediate sacrifice for the ultimate good. Yet it can hardly be expected that many can, without some help, resist temptations that are legion in a country at war.

Solutions do not lie in the direction of less knowledge and greater repression. Surely we have learned our lesson, for example, from the failure of the Prohibition experiment which attempted to impose a conduct code on an unwilling and uneducated public who quickly learned all the tricks of sidestepping the laws relating to the sale and use of intoxicating beverages.

The time has come for a frank airing of the issues, for the shedding of hypocrisy and for a concerted effort on the part of all who guide young people to fortify them to face and meet the problems that confront them; and, most important of all, to help them to cultivate the positive ideals by which their lives may be finely shaped.

The writer has attempted to weave a pattern of the basic strands of thought and program planning which emerged from the deliberations of the Seminar.

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2. See Bibliography, p. 38, *The Challenge to Action*.



## REASONS FOR CHANGING MORAL STANDARDS

Changing moral standards are due, in part at least, to (a) the weakening in the chief traditional props to good conduct (growing disrespect for government and law, the movement away from organized religion, weakening of family life, the growing anonymity of community life); (b) the clash of the older and younger generations concerning ideas of right and wrong; (c) the nature of adolescence itself with its rebellion against authority, its need for adventure and experimentation and its lack of established ideals and goals; and (d) confusion in general attitudes regarding sex matters.

### *Weakening in Chief Props to Good Conduct<sup>3</sup>*

During the past fifty years the industrial revolution, with its increasing urbanization, dynamic mass production and diffusion of scientific knowledge, has upset the customs and traditions upon which American life had been built. Today we are living in a time of conflicting conventions and standards, of religious doubts and changing family *mores*, of general social excitation and economic upheaval. Added to this, certain authorities and sanctions have been growing weaker for decades before the present and last war. In the past these exerted a powerful influence in conventionalizing behavior according to a relatively fixed system of religion and ethics, under which the difference between "right" and "wrong" was fairly clear. These authoritative social institutions determined the chief qualities of our moral climate; and with their weakening, the moral climate is changing.

Because of the disillusionment about the methods of "practical politics," government and law—in the past among the strongest sources of authority in controlling conduct—no longer

3. From unpublished lecture, *The Moral Climate of the Times*, by Professor Sheldon Glueck, Harvard Law School.

receive universal respect. The authority of the law and of the courts has been waning because the very complexity and technicality of modern criminal law, procedure and administration have aroused antagonism and an attitude of ridicule toward a social device that lags stubbornly behind economic, social and moral change. Evasions of law, except for serious crimes, are increasingly regarded with something of amusement, if not with actual admiration.

Another element in the undermining of disciplined conduct is the decrease in interest in formal religion throughout the United States. A study made some ten years ago by Hornell Hart on *Changes in Religious Interests and Attitudes as Reflected in Books and Magazines*<sup>4</sup> clearly reflected this movement away from the practice of formal religion. An increase in *intellectual* interest in certain religious topics and concepts, however, is evident, particularly in relation to the conflict between religion and science.

There are no accurate figures to prove the effect on church attendance of American participation in the present struggle, but many ministers and local churches report proofs of their people's urgent desire for spiritual guidance in these days of deep emotional stress.

Of the many changes in family life over the last fifty years which contribute to the shift in moral standards, attention was particularly directed to the increasing proportion of unsuccessful marriages. One marriage in every six ends in divorce. Added to this is the lessening authority of parents over their children and the weakening in the standard-setting and value-defining influences of the family group. The old-fashioned home of rural or small-town America is no longer "the school and citadel of the homely virtues. No longer is it the center of industry, the chief school of habit formation and of fixed moral ideals. Its members spend more of their daytime hours outside the home in factory and shop and many night-time hours in the movies,

4. Contained in the survey of Recent Social Trends in the United States, President Hoover's Research Committee on Social Trends.



in dance halls or night clubs. With the emancipation of youth from family domination have come serious repercussions on the behavior standards of modern youth."

The growing anonymity of community living is something which all of us have experienced. The rapid means of communication which make suburban life possible also facilitate the moulding of habits and attitudes by the newspaper, magazine, radio and cinema. Living in suburbs, people are drawn to the city for work and play. They read its press, partake of its amusements and thus remain, in spirit, denizens of the city. Large urban centers with easy means of transportation to and from centers of population, of industry and amusement, bring freedom from the pressure of public opinion and the prying eyes of the old-time neighbor. This anonymity naturally reflects itself in the conduct of young and old alike. To this must be added the marked increase in leisure time resulting from the growing mechanization of industry.

### *The Clash of Generations*<sup>5</sup>

Another important factor contributing to the shift in moral standards is the enhancement of the age-old struggle between the older and younger generations. It is characteristic of our society, emphasized an eminent cultural anthropologist, that our young people seek to conform to the *mores* of their own age group rather than to those of the older generation. They are sometimes actually ashamed of being "good," as defined by their elders. In primitive societies in which behavior patterns are relatively fixed, the divergence of youth's behavior from the established pattern is neither desired nor easy. In more dynamic societies no two generations can have the same conduct patterns. The elders of our generation on the whole find it difficult to understand youth because we did not and cannot share their particular experiences.

5. From unpublished lecture, *The Moral Standards of Different Cultures*, by Dr. Margaret Mead, American Museum of Natural History, New York City.

### *The Nature of Adolescence*<sup>6</sup>

A thoughtful consideration of the nature of adolescence shows clearly why young people are finding it so difficult to walk the tightrope of traditional morality. Obviously there is no difference between the basic qualities and characteristics and instinctual urges of adolescents today and those of fifty years ago, when life was outwardly much simpler. But the multiplication of stimuli to self-expression and the whole tempo of modern life make self-control for the adolescent less and less easy. He has to adjust to a more complex family, school and community life. His relationships to those about him and to his environment are therefore in a state of flux. They are complicated by the fact that his adaptive capacities are imperfect, for adolescence is a period in which the inner harmony of mental life is disturbed. The normal adolescent has aimless longings, vague feelings of tension and expectation, undefined feelings of hope, fervid need for contact and devotion, great curiosity about himself and his environment; he craves activity, has the urge to fight and, in general, a marked enthusiasm for "life." Most of these feelings are signs of beginning sexual development; that is, of emotional eroticism which usually appears earlier than actual physical maturity. He experiments with various ways of managing his inner tensions, sometimes through rigid asceticism with its consequent resort to spiritual interests; sometimes in revolt against his parents or society as a whole. In whatever way he finds self-expression, he feels the need for attachment, guidance and support on the one hand and for independence and rebellion on the other. Rarely is he sufficiently well understood by his elders.

The psychological changes of adolescence are foreshadowed by the development of the primary sex glands and the secondary sex characteristics which influence the feelings and attitudes of boys and girls in their teens. Some tend to be abnormally pre-

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6. From unpublished lecture, *The Emotional Needs of Youth*, by Dr. Edward Bibring, Boston psychiatrist; and from the unpublished lecture *The Psycho-Physical Needs of Youth*, by Dr. Jacob E. Finesinger, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston.



occupied with sexual topics. Children who approach adolescence with attitudes and taboos picked up as a result of personal inhibitions plus an environmental rigidity in respect to sex topics are thrown into intense conflict, the resolution of which is generally handled either in direct rebellion against parental standards or in flight from reality into the imagination. For example, unless the realities of menstruation, masturbation and nocturnal emissions are understood as natural functions, adolescents are bound to have painful conflicts and anxieties, and parents too often reinforce the guilt feelings of the adolescent about these processes instead of alleviating them in a natural and constructive way.

Obviously in the complex world of today, the adolescent, like the proverbial drowning person, is eager to grasp at any straw. The weakening supports to responsible conduct have not been sufficiently superseded by other props on which he can lean for moral strength. In every culture, except in certain primitive societies, the adolescent, by his very nature, necessarily struggles painfully toward adulthood; but probably in no era has he been more confused and disturbed than now, as he faces the innumerable complexities of daily living in a dynamic age.

### *Confused Attitudes Toward Sex*

Our ideas about sex matters are in a state of flux, to a degree unprecedented in any previous era. We are exposed on every hand to a bombardment of traditional *mores* by the newer ideas emerging from psycho-analytic psychology. Our resistance to this new knowledge is lessening as we try to apply it to our understanding of the world about us. We observe and participate in a growing freedom (in the broadest sense) between the sexes, not only in business and professional life but also in social activity. Almost without our being aware of it, our traditional ways of conduct are passing into an oblivion from which it may not be easy to rescue them should it seem desirable to do so. Elders and youth alike are caught in the midstream

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of a changing morality and, if we are to save ourselves from utter confusion, we must take the time to absorb the newer knowledge that we have at our disposal about the place of sex in life and arrive at a positive and constructive policy toward it.

We have the choice of affirming sex or denying it. In affirming it, we are not implying promiscuity of sex relationships but rather suggesting that love-making needs to be cultivated as an art and given considerable time for development. In denying sex, we are honoring and valuing restraint and the concealment of sexuality. The kind of sex affirmation which might be constructive in human development would not repress sexuality but neither would it make it "free and easy." It would manage it in such a way as to develop its most creative satisfactions. It would treat sexuality not as an ugly tool to be used when necessary and then put away out of sight but would associate it with things which are significant, beautiful and inspiring.

It is high time to depart from the policy of naive *laissez-faire* individualism to one in which we will choose those values which will benefit society.<sup>7</sup>

## HOW WE MAY GUIDE YOUTH TO WHOLESOME SELF-MANAGEMENT

From our discussions in the Seminar, it soon became evident that the problem of moral standards cannot be dealt with separate and apart from the much larger problem of the wholesome physical and mental maturation of youth. For, we reasoned, if this goal can be assured, youth will have been given the most effective means of *self-management* and will be able to grapple successfully with the harsh realities of life in a rapidly changing society. Physical and mental maturity is the staunchest bulwark against all impulses to irresponsible living.

It is this principle, therefore, which runs through all the pro-

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7. From unpublished lecture, *Modern Problems of Family Life*, by Professor Joseph K. Folsom.



grams which we devised. Before presenting the fruits of our discussions—the principles that should underlie any program which will achieve the goal of wholesome self-management—it is well to review the major suggestions that were made for meeting the problem of changing moral standards.

### *General Educational Goals<sup>8</sup>*

First we must, through our educational system, make youth aware of being caught up in a current of profound historic change which in turn explains the vagueness of their notions about what is "right" and what is "wrong." Secondly, we must teach them to build up all their internal resources for coping intelligently and realistically with the bewildering issues of life. And thirdly, there must be a redefinition in simple and convincing terms of ideals of personal and family life based on a scientific groundwork and on a wholesome conception of the "Self."

In order to reach these three high objectives, we must provide young people with effective substitutes for the waning authorities and sanctions of the past. This is a long range task and will require many years. Meanwhile, however, there are more immediate goals toward which to work if we recognize that "people are not born moral and law-abiding." They must be taught to abide by certain standards of behavior. Although the war, with its tremendous extra pressures, results for some in a lessening adherence to traditional conduct standards, nevertheless changing moral attitudes and practices cannot be attributed primarily to the war, but rather to fundamental currents and forces. The nature of conduct is the result of a constant balance between human impulses and ideas on the one hand and social demands, pressures and standard-setting instrumentalities on the other. Therefore, children must be taught to control their natural impulses toward aggressive action, toward sexual expression, toward the acquisition of things they desire, and the

8. From unpublished lecture, *The Moral Climate of the Times*, by Professor Sheldon Glueck, Harvard Law School.

like. "The guidance of conduct, in accordance with legal, religious, and ethical standards requires hard and ceaseless effort throughout life."

Parents and teachers have not done their part well enough in making young people realize, for example, that the true freedom for which they unconsciously grope when they are self-indulgent, is best achieved by wise restraints. In recent years, the emphasis in our educational system and in our whole outlook on life has been predominantly on "self-expression" so that many young people have loyalties directed largely to themselves. Adequate loyalties, alone, can provide the immediate motivations for self-discipline and the proper management of instinctual urges. It is not their fault that they have interpreted "living their own lives" to mean carelessness in social relationships.<sup>9</sup>

### *Development of "Common Language" Between the Generations*<sup>10</sup>

One of our primary needs is the development of a "common language," a psychological medium of exchange between youth and their elders. We know that young people are basically the same as their elders, although their concepts may be different. For example: the older generation, in talking of spiritual values, says "the most important thing in the world is to have high ideals;" the younger generation says "you have to have some sense of direction." In discussing the Negro problem, the older generation talks about the "race question," the younger about "the caste system." In a conversation about France, pre-war thinkers speak of "a country which represented the arts," and moderns of "a country which represents decadent politics." When the two generations express their views on morals, the older says "promiscuity is wrong, immoral, wicked," the young-

9. From discussion of Professor Kirtley F. Mather, Director of the Harvard Summer School and Professor O. Mowrer, Harvard University.

10. From unpublished lecture, *The Moral Standards of Different Cultures*, by Dr. Margaret Mead.



er "promiscuity prevents the development of responsible personal relationships."

Therefore, before any code of behavior can be developed that would be acceptable to both generations (based primarily on a sense of responsibility to self, family, community), they must fully understand each other, instead of "conversing in Chinese," as we tend to do at present. We must build up a common denominator of abstractions about conduct standards which the older and younger generations alike can accept.

### *Understanding the Needs of Adolescence*<sup>11</sup>

A prime basis for all program planning is the need for understanding the adolescent and his groping for moorings, because it is in this period of life that a tendency toward mismanagement of instinctual drives first becomes apparent.

The physical needs of adolescence are, on the whole, the easiest to meet,—well-balanced diets, sufficient vitamins and suitable glandular therapy where indicated; the greatest difficulty is in satisfying the needs that are associated with *emotional* development. In order to understand and help the adolescent attain his maturity with the minimum of discomfort and maladjustment and the maximum of health and creativity, educational programs must focus first on the attitude of parents and teachers. Unless they can frankly, reasonably and objectively face and accept the realities of adolescent behavior, they will not be able to help resolve the conflicts that characterize this period. It is especially important to avoid an attitude of superiority in dealing with adolescents if their wall of isolation is not to be reinforced.

Furthermore, it must not be forgotten that the adolescent is constantly changing, that his friendships are usually not lasting; and that, because he is seeking outlets for his emotions, it makes little difference whether he focuses them on friends of

11. From unpublished lecture, *The Psycho-Physical Needs of Youth*, by Dr. Jacob E. Finesinger; and from unpublished lecture, *The Emotional Needs of Youth*, by Dr. Edward Bibring.

his own age, on adults, on his own sex or on the opposite sex. The adolescent may give up friends as suddenly as he acquires them. His feelings for them are often exaggerated and not entirely genuine. Since adolescent friendships are the outgrowth of an inner need for organizing vague emotions and drives and are of a fleeting character only, the adolescent, when he gives up a friend, is incapable of understanding what his behavior may mean to the transient object of his affections. Such information becomes of obvious importance in planning any program for developing mature standards of behavior.

Adolescents should be encouraged to make varied social contacts, especially with members of the opposite sex. The ultimate goal of program planning is that of helping young people to adjust their individual and personal needs to the demands of the social group. One of the best ways to accomplish this is in the provision of suitable recreational facilities through which boys and girls in their teens can make wholesome friendships. If these are not provided, they will be found in the alleyways and the streets. The neighborhood is the most promising unit in which to develop suitable recreational resources, because a greater feeling of stability and belonging can be developed on this basis than in a wider organizational unit. Neighborhood and community programs must shift from a philosophy of paternalism to one based on a realistic insight into the needs of adolescent youth.<sup>12</sup>

It was further suggested that adolescent difficulties relating to management of instinctual drives might best be prevented by giving pre-adolescents whatever sex education they demand, and encouraging children to assume responsibility for their own decisions and plans; because maladjustments of the adolescent period can, in many adult individuals, be traced to experiences in earlier years.<sup>13</sup>

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12. From unpublished lecture, *Youth in Conflict with Authority*, by Dr. Peter Blos, Brooklyn College, New York.

13. From unpublished lecture, *The Emotional Needs of Youth*, by Dr. Edward Bibring.

Obviously, therefore, we must concentrate a good deal of attention in our program-planning on the growth and attitudes of the pre-adolescent.

### *Children Need Happy Parents*<sup>14</sup>

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the influence which parents exert on their children's development. But all mothers and fathers do not realize that their own integration and happiness is a mirror in and through which their children look at life. In the future we must assist both parents to find an equal opportunity to continue their individual development after marriage, for it is only by the fulfillment of their own creative interests that they can rear happy children.

Children will grow into wholesome adults only if they are reared in families whole-heartedly interested in them; by parents who themselves know where they are going and are competent to deal with realities.

### *Development of Social Responsibility through Work Programs*<sup>15</sup>

Another aspect of program planning to prevent the breakdown of behavior standards in an age-span when young people are naturally rebellious against authority is the provision for suitable work experiences during the school years. It is characteristic of the adolescent that he needs to experiment with work as well as with love affairs, friendships, and systems of ideas. Only in this way will he find himself. He needs to be provided opportunities to make his own mistakes and discover his best abilities in the process. And more especially he needs to learn to work and to develop the sense of responsibility which comes through personal effort.

14. From unpublished lecture, *Modern Problems of Family Life*, by Professor Joseph K. Folsom.

15. From unpublished lecture, *Youth in Conflict with Authority*, by Dr. Peter Blos.



### *School Policies to Offset Wartime Conduct Hazards*<sup>16</sup>

Although it was recognized that we must look beyond the immediate wartime situation into a post-war world of harrassed and possibly disillusioned youth who will need especial help, there are, nevertheless, some immediate problems that can be handled by the schools in order to reduce the tensions of the war. Is it possible, through social engineering, to offset the conditions which have been enhanced by the war and to create others which are more favorable to the wholesome development of young people? Any programs which might be devised for this purpose should not overtax the emotions of adolescents, because most of the breakdowns which they experience are due to emotional over-strain. Therefore, instead of increasing the pressures upon them during the war period, we should do the reverse. Instead of increasing disciplinary measures in the classroom, for example, it would be well to relax them somewhat. In times of social tension the adolescent particularly needs the sustaining influence of mature adults, and also more opportunity to experiment with the taking on of responsibility and to participate in meaningful activities. Such activities would serve to bring adolescents into closer touch with the adults with whom they are potentially in conflict, would relieve their tensions and would promote their much needed desire to belong to a group.

Any program planning at this time should emphasize the key position of the schools in helping young people to grow into mature and well-integrated adulthood; for the guidance of young people is not alone a family responsibility, particularly during the adolescent period in which the transition from the family circle into community life is made. The average modern community, unfortunately, is not organized to cope with this period of emancipation of youth from family life. Therefore, schools must fill the gap.

Speed-up programs in the high schools are especially undesir-

16. Dr. Peter Blos, *Ibid.*

able. The full school terms should be retained. The process of growing up from adolescence to full maturity requires time and to try to hasten this process through accelerated school programs will only result in instability. If the problem of the young adolescent is not to get entirely out of hand, schools will have to lengthen the school day where there are no other satisfactory leisure-time outlets provided in the community. Further, school curricula must be more individualized and made more interesting if they are to compete with the attractiveness of the outside world. In this time of great stress the school must not serve as a shelter from life but must relate itself closely to urgent life activities. Schools must become community centers, and teachers community workers who will be responsible for many aspects of group life and not confine their interests to one small segment of the pupil's existence. They should, for example, make more effort to draw parents into the life of the school.

### *Clarification of Ideas About Sex*<sup>17</sup>

The time has arrived for us frankly to face our confusions about the place of sex in life and to make an honest attempt to clarify them. The current attitudes toward sex are the result of prudery, silence and ignorance in the handling of this problem. Theoretically, society sanctions sexual activity only for biological purposes but, in practical living, it condones or winks at its utilization as a pleasure mechanism. The subject of sex, and even the word, has been a bogey.

Society has done little to help youth understand that sexual desire and its biological goal are not necessarily one and the same. Sex education for raising the behavior standards of youth must deal with sex not merely as a physical urge, but as a foundation for companionship, affection and the relationships which make life complete and effective.

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17. From unpublished lecture, *Social Hygiene as Mental Hygiene*, by Dr. Ira S. Wile, New York City. To be published in *Journal of Criminal Psychopathology*, April 1943.

Sex knowledge should be made an integral part of all learning, and include personal hygiene as well as preparation for courtship, marriage and parenthood. Society has postponed sex education beyond the time when it is most useful, namely in the early 'teens. What sex education should include and when, where and how it should be provided, depends in practice upon the state of social thinking in each community.

Society, in seeking to restrain people from what it considers to be unwholesome sexual expression, frequently employs methods that run counter to the best principles of mental hygiene, instead of stressing the positive aspects of sex experience. In this negative category are the reasons usually given for refraining from sexual indulgence, among which are: fear of disease or pregnancy; shame at uncleanness; guilt feelings or feelings of inferiority; lack of "will power;" a sense of sin, or the violation of a divine injunction; fear of social rejection because of personal unworthiness; fear of the effect of sex indulgence upon growth and sanity; danger of lowered respect for the opposite sex; or fear of the opposite sex.

Mental hygiene, however, teaches us that the more creative elements in sex expression should be utilized in social hygiene programs, namely, the naturalness and significance of the sex drive and its phenomena (sex desire, curiosity, interest, search for adventure, and experimentation). It is wiser to foster fastidious attitudes toward the self, permitting the voluntary acceptance or rejection of sexual patterns, without inducing a sense of guilt, sin, frustration or humiliation. It is rational social and mental hygiene to cultivate a sense of responsibility in young people based on available knowledge. This course cultivates better attitudes toward society. It supports ideas and ideals founded upon an enlightened conscience, an effort of the will, sound ethics, good citizenship, civic honesty and social decency.

Youth must be offered deeper and wider knowledge and be urged to live with a sense of the more profound meaning and value of life.



## PRINCIPLES BEHIND THE PROGRAMS<sup>18</sup>

From these suggestions and others that were made, we were able to evolve at least the major principles that should underlie any programs designed to facilitate the wholesome maturation of youth—to meet the more immediate wartime situation, a program for the protection of youth in the face of the added pressures and distractions of the war period; a health program, a program of parent education, a program for schools, and finally, suggestions to churches. A recreational program was not prepared because so much activity is already going on in this field. Implicit in all the plans, however, is a recognition of the importance of leisure-time activities.

### *Protective Needs of Youth in Wartime*<sup>19</sup>

A consideration of the immediate protective needs of youth in wartime was, by and large, the point of departure for all the discussions in our Seminar. For the study was undertaken originally because of our knowledge that many young people are, in this crisis, mismanaging their instinctual drives.

This is the time to arouse public interest in the whole problem presented by changing conduct standards because the wartime situation serves to dramatize and to emphasize its importance. Communities all over the country have sprung into action and we have heard recently of many "vice drives," curfew laws, U.S.O. programs and similar means of coping with the immediate problem which in some regions, particularly around Army camps and defense industries, is almost out of hand. In general, the attack has gone in two directions: toward repressive measures, of which the curfew is an illustration; and toward carefully planned and sponsored recreational activities of a whole-

18. Mrs. T. Grafton Abbott, Consultant in Parent Education of the Massachusetts State Department of Public Health, gave unstintingly of her time to the supervision of the workshops out of which the programs emerged.

19. Discussion on Protective Needs of Youth in Wartime was in charge of Mr. Richard H. Anthony and Dr. Helen I. D. McGillicuddy of the Massachusetts Social Hygiene Society. Published in full in *Journal of Social Hygiene*, Nov. 1942, under title, "Immediate Protective Needs of Youth."

some sort. These two approaches are not sufficient, however. They constitute only a small part of the community's possible handling of this problem.

The group—to quote its own statement—gave consideration to “elements in a program that could be put into effect now to meet the immediate problems which arise in a community where soldiers, sailors and war workers are meeting girls in public places, resulting in many instances in conduct publicly considered undesirable. It was not the concern of this particular group to consider ways of preventing the problem from arising, through long-term methods of approach. We are not concerned, therefore, with antecedents, with morals, with trends, with standards, with codes of conduct. These are the concern of the Seminar as a whole. We are the fire department answering the alarm after the building is ablaze. We may wish the conflagration could have been prevented, we may hope future structures may be built fire-proof. Our task, however, is to put out the flames as we find them with whatever resources we have at our immediate command.”

One of the immediate tasks is to promote the public health by the reduction of venereal disease through the repression of commercialized prostitution. Every possible means,—press, radio, pulpit,—has to be utilized in this connection to make parents aware of the dangers to inexperienced 'teen-age girls who frequent “hot spots.” In view of the fact that there are parents who, either through misguided confidence or indifference are unable to exercise their parental responsibilities, protective agencies both public and private have been set up to do the job which some parents have neglected.

The statement adopted a few years ago by the Child Welfare League of America is pertinent today: “that the problems which confront the protective worker are rooted by conditions outside as well as inside the individual or the family. To deal adequately with these problems, therefore, requires not only per-

sonal contacts . . . but also in most cases some modification of the surrounding environment. In seeking to bring about such a modification the protective worker has need of recourse to a wide variety of community resources. Social agencies of all kinds, churches, courts, clinics, hospitals, schools, playgrounds, parks, camps, libraries, museums, interested individuals,—all these resources and others, if widely used, can be valuable in case work."

What should be the relationship between the protective worker and the person who is in need of protection? "The girl who frequents the parks or cafes to seek out the company of soldiers or sailors does not place herself in the hands of a protective worker; nor does the prostitute voluntarily seek rehabilitation; nor does the operator of a house of prostitution seek to be regulated or put out of business. The protective worker has to make the overture to the prospective client and must have some authority which is recognized by the public. There is a paramount difference in the approach of the protective worker and the social case worker to their clients. The process of social case work begins with the voluntary seeking of assistance; while in protective work, the worker must naturally approach the client with some semblance of authority. It is this restrained use of authority which is the key to proper case handling in the social protection field; indeed unrestrained use of authority negates the true value of social protection which lies chiefly in its rehabilitatory procedures."

Some social protection workers apparently believe that the first contact with sex delinquents is ideally made by a police-woman trained in social work procedures. Such a person must be able to differentiate "between girls whose behavior is innocent, the hardened delinquents, the prostitutes, the girls who can be rehabilitated and those who will be recalcitrant to the last." In view of the peculiar problems of the adolescent period when youngsters show antagonism and aggressiveness toward adults, it is necessary for the protective worker to be "non-shockable."



She must have the attitude of a listener rather than that of someone sitting in judgment. She must be able also to interpret the behavior of youngsters to their parents as well as to explain to them the reasons for certain legal restrictions.

The guide posts that can be set up for a program to meet the immediate protective needs of youth were summarized as follows:

1. Any program of attack is a community responsibility. No single agency is equipped to meet the problems in their entirety. The existing resources of each community must be tapped and expanded where necessary.

2. Problem girls will respond to understanding and sympathetic treatment. The experience of the maternity home is that the unmarried mother can be restored to a normal and useful life after a potentially demoralizing experience. Certainly the sexually promiscuous girl fortunate enough to escape such a predicament, or even a venereal infection, is also susceptible to rehabilitary treatment. And this is said in full appreciation of the fact that the girl who knows enough to escape these consequences is often the type most resistant to case treatment. We know that even the prostitute is not incorrigible in every instance.

3. The worker who first deals with these problems must be armed with authority, but must know when to threaten, when to cajole, when to sympathize. The worker must be experienced in separating the wheat from the chaff among the girls whose conduct is undesirable. The combination of qualities demanded in such a worker dictates the use of policewomen trained in social work as the first line forces in any social protection program.

4. We have much to learn as to the relationship between community conditions and various manifestations of anti-social conduct. Community surveys of youth agencies ought to give us a clue as to where our efforts can best be applied.

5. We are not nearly as enlightened and free of taboo as we think we are. We find social agencies reluctant to deal with sexually promiscuous girls and denying assistance to those with venereal infections. We discover a lack of knowledge even on the part of social workers as to the cause and cure of venereal diseases. We find that while we have been expecting the newspapers to take up the cudgels in our behalf, they have been waiting for us to tell them what we are doing and thinking.

"This, then, is our program in essence: community organization of resources for a chain of protective services starting with policewomen and leading to all the social, medical, and welfare agencies, with proper shelter available to house girls when necessary. It is in translating the plan into action that we meet our difficulties. We encounter mutual suspicion among agencies, lack of understanding of what the other fellow does, fear of offending good people with frank discussion of one of the oldest and commonest problems in the world—sex. If this discussion has had any value at all it has been in reviewing this program and in re-affirming our belief in its soundness and in its ultimate practicality."

### *Good Health and Wholesome Maturity*<sup>20</sup>

A health program to aid youth in arriving at more wholesome management of their instinctual drives, demands that medicine concern itself more and more with the total personality of young people rather than with any one illness or organic disease. "It is much more important for the physician to know about all the aspects of a young person (family and personal history, hopes and aspirations, religious life, sex life, factors entering into choice of career, and so on) than it is merely to know about his physical ailments."

The habits and attitudes of patients toward life are commonly more important revelations than the nature of their physical diseases. As an illustration, the revealing fact was cited

20. Discussion of Health program was in charge of Dr. Arlie V. Bock, Professor of Hygiene at Harvard University.

that 75 per cent of all the complaints brought to the Hygiene Clinic of Harvard University have nothing whatsoever to do with organic disease but are the result of unhappiness, pressures, worries, grief, dissatisfactions, inability to gain independence or failure in achievement. The presence of one or more such psychic disturbances inevitably leads to fatigue, discouragement and anxieties. This is vivid proof that health is not the absence of disease but rather an affirmative sense of well-being growing out of suitable outlets that give personal satisfaction and have social value.

Therefore, the best way to insure the health of young people is to guide them into paths that will result in a recognition of their personal and social achievement in accordance with their particular capacities. We do not as yet know how to bring this about through our family life and educational systems. Many young people lack a sense of achievement, because they have never worked. Opportunities should be provided for them in their early years to serve apprenticeships in order that they may develop a feeling of responsibility, of accomplishment, of doing something vital. During the war years this particular problem will not exist. Being party to the war effort should have a good effect on health, because the sense of accomplishment and of grappling with reality will give the individual less opportunity and less time to develop certain personal anxieties and fears. This statement is made in full recognition of the fact that the war brings other fears and dangers which, in turn, produce other difficulties.

Although the work being done in the field of public health is of the utmost importance and must be continued, its horizon must be expanded toward a better understanding of people as its chief aim, if the utmost in the prevention of disease is to be accomplished. This implies that intensive studies of every aspect of the development of children and youth must be made. Among the questions to which it is important to find answers are: What are young people striving toward? What are they



capable of accomplishing? How can they be helped to achieve the best of which they are natively capable?

Little can be expected in the control of venereal disease or alcoholism, for example, unless we know more about the background of the people who cannot resist the impulse to drink or who carelessly indulge in sexual acts which result in venereal infection. It is necessary, above all, to understand the needs which they express in such behavior before we can do the really constructive work needed to reduce these scourges.

### *Educating Parents for Guidance of Youth*<sup>21</sup>

In the course of this Seminar much was said about the responsibility of parents for the guidance of their children, emphasis being particularly placed on the fact that the cradle of education is in the early inter-personal family relationships; that the example set in the family and the attitudes developed there are those which, to a large extent, persist in later life; that it is not until the beginning of the adolescent period that the child really emerges from the home influences to struggle with the adjustments in community life; and that the wider community is not sufficiently aware of the need to provide opportunities for young people to make constructive social adaptations. Thus the burden continues to rest mainly upon the family, with sporadic if any assistance from the schools, which are still largely concerned with the teaching of subject matter rather than with the education of the child and the emergence of the child's total personality toward full fruition.

It was suggested by one of our speakers that by the time a youngster enters school at the average age of six, his behavior patterns are already so fixed that it is not easy for the school

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21. Discussion of parent education program was in charge of Dr. Augusta Bronner, Consultant Director of the Judge Baker Guidance Center, Boston. Assisting her were Mrs. T. Grafton Abbott, Consultant in Parent Education, Division of Child Hygiene, Massachusetts State Department of Public Health; Miss Grace Wills, Director-in-Charge, Lincoln House, Boston; and Mrs. DeForest Anthony, Lay Leader in Parent Education under the auspices of the Division of Child Hygiene, Massachusetts State Department of Public Health.

greatly to modify them. Much needs yet to be learned about the extent to which, and the means whereby, behavior patterns can be changed once they have been formed in the family group. However, in our program planning in the field of parental education, there is no need to wait for the results of any researches now under way and those yet to come. We already possess information which can be passed on to parents, not only about the nature of human personality, but also about the constituents of wholesome family living, which, if properly understood and absorbed into the daily functioning of the home, would result in far more creative adaptations to life on the part of young people than we see today.

If this is to be accomplished parent education programs should reach the needs of parents in various socio-economic and cultural levels and especially of those who do not spontaneously seek such guidance. Parent education should not be concentrated only on mothers; we must remember that fathers too are parents.

What are the universal problems and basic concepts which should underlie programs of parent education? First of all, the best parent is one who is psychologically and ethically well integrated. Many parents have certain emotional as well as educational limitations which make it difficult if not impossible for them to absorb and put into use the content of parent education programs. Such parents are immature and therefore unready for the job of parenthood. For this reason, parent education programs must be so designed that the parents themselves will grow during the process of learning how to guide their children more effectively.

Can we have parent education programs without first formulating the goals parents wish for their children? The main goal as formulated by the group discussing these questions, was that *parents should so guide their children that at the end of the adolescent period maturity will have been achieved*. But what is maturity? A true adult is a person "of complete physical development, controlled emotional reactions, and tolerant atti-

tudes. He has the ability to treat others objectively. He is independent of parental control, he has evolved some philosophy of life with which he is reasonably satisfied, is usually able to get along without attracting attention in the ordinary social life about him, and has acquired a sense of responsibility for the well-being of his fellow-men. He has economic independence or is on the road toward attaining it."

If the attainment of full maturity is the goal to be achieved, parent education programs must include information about what is to be expected in the individual growth of children at different age levels so that parents can determine whether or not their children are developing normally. At the same time, such programs must assist parents in recognizing and making the most of individual differences in children.

Parents are often confused by the divergent pulls of adolescent children, sometimes toward independence, at other times toward excessive dependence on their families. If parents are made to realize that at a certain stage of development this is a natural phenomenon, their handling of the dilemma would not be as confused and damaging as it now so often is.

Another element in achieving the goal of wholesome maturation is that of helping the child to develop a consistent philosophy by which he can live happily and usefully. In this connection, therefore, parents must understand how to develop "ego-ideals" or standards. They must have some realization of the need for aiding children to make satisfactory social adjustments *outside* the family group and must therefore have some ideas as to the best way of developing those inter-personal relations *within* the family which will aid in making later adjustments to persons in the outside world.

In general, the group concluded that there are three principles underlying parent education programs which have as their goal the guiding of youth toward successful maturity: (1) Guidance must begin as soon as the child is born. (2) The desired end can only be achieved through the process of socializa-



tion, which in turn is made possible only if the relations between the parents and their children give the children a sense of security, of being wanted, and loved. Only under such conditions can children build up "ego-ideals" and identify themselves with their parents and then build up within themselves the behavior standards which they have learned at home, in this way becoming morally self-sufficient. (3) Parent-education must be directed toward relationships beyond the home itself, since the family is not an isolated unit. It must take into account the relationship between the home and all community groups and agencies. Parent education cannot be separated from the socio-economic needs of neighborhoods. Therefore, such programs must include the parental guidance of youth toward greater participation in local neighborhood activities and community projects.

All in all, children must be led toward a much larger measure of sharing in family and community life. Parents, if organized into groups, can not only improve the guidance of their own children but can indirectly affect the well-being of the children of others by jointly exerting pressures for better community recreational facilities, more wholesome movies, better teaching of civic responsibility in the schools, and so on. Such groups of parents could exert their influence toward the development of community facilities for helping other families to achieve the goals and standards which they want for their own children.

A great deal of material is already available for parent education. It is important not only to utilize the information we have at our disposal but to keep parents informed regarding new scientific ideas and findings. There are many community resources that most parents never utilize, such as the school plant, church organizations, libraries and behavior clinics. The best parent education programs will make wide use of existing information and community resources while always reaching out for more knowledge and toward the improvement and extension of the resources now available.

### *School Programs for Facilitating the Wholesome Maturation of Youth*<sup>22</sup>

The Seminar formulated five general principles which must underlie school programs on the elementary, high school or college level:

(1) *In the individual's relations with social groups*, happy participation and an active sense of responsibility to contribute the largest possible share for the benefit of all.

(2) *In work*, the joy of skilled creation, personal growth, and contribution to the social good.

(3) *In relations with the opposite sex*, self-restraint, respect for the needs and rights of others, sincerity in expressing affection.

(4) *In relations with other races*, nations, classes, creeds, eagerness to discover the common humanity of all and to promote such social, economic and political justice as to make possible genuine fellow-feeling among all.

(5) *In relation to the problems and historic doctrines of religion*, as in all things, complete honesty and an eager desire to learn and to live by the truth, in the light of the experience of the race, while respecting the varying convictions of others.

In view of the fact that the whole problem of *sex education* loomed so large throughout the Seminar discussions, a separate report on this subject was made by the group working on school programs. It should be said that there was not absolute agreement on the part of the group working on this problem. By and large, however, it was agreed that sex education must be integrated with the educational system if it is to be a really effective instrumentality in the guidance of youth toward the control and use of instinctual urges. The following statement<sup>23</sup> should

22. Discussion on School program was in charge of Dr. Jean Mendenhall, lecturer on Marriage at Boston University. Assisting her were Professor Linwood Chase of Boston University; Professor Harold DeWolf of Boston University; Dr. Mary DeKruif of Wellesley College; and Dr. James C. Janney of the Marriage Consultation Center, Boston.

23. Prepared by Dr. James C. Janney, Boston University Medical School; Director Marriage Study Association of Boston.

be considered in the light of the points of view expressed above by Professor Joseph K. Folsom and Dr. Ira S. Wile:

"One of the important goals of successful education aims at setting satisfactory standards for normal emotional growth and attitudes. We are admittedly in a very confused state as to our sexual ideas, the elders as well as youth. This is due largely to the changing ideology of this subject and to social changes which result in a split between the biological normal and the possibilities of marriage imposed by our present social organization. Our social conventions have been handed down from a past when attitudes toward sex, as well as social organization, were different from the present, and as a result we are torn between our feelings, which seem normal and justifiable, and the inherited conventional teachings.

"Modern beliefs about sex have changed away from the older ideas. We now recognize it as normal, and as 'right' in its proper sphere, as breathing or digestion. If sex is not wicked and if it has personal values, these values should be enriched by every legitimate means to contribute to the enrichment of marriage. This suggests a reversal of our former hush-hush attitude about sex to a frank educational program based on dependable, carefully presented information instead of the haphazard misinformation which at present is the basis for so many of the ideas of such a large proportion of our youth. In order to accomplish this successfully, we must arrive at a satisfactory sex ethic.

"It was agreed in the discussion that parents are the normal and proper source of sex instruction, so far as they are qualified. It was recognized that the moulding of sex attitudes begins at birth in the home. This is partly due to the child's interpretation of the attitudes of the parents and other grown-ups, and partly the result of answers to his questions. Parents' attitudes must be carefully guarded so as not to give the child the wrong impression. Answers to questions should be truthful and satisfying to the child,—otherwise he will turn to other sources for information, usually less desirable. The answers should not go beyond the point in question, but the child should be encouraged to return and ask other questions when the need arises.

"When it came to the consideration of the schools' responsibility in these directions the opinion of the group was not so unanimous. It was agreed that sex education was desirable but there was no agreement on the emphasis and method.



"There seemed to be less difficulty with children of primary school age. Here sex education can be carried on normally through courses in nature study, biology, physiology and hygiene. It was agreed, however, that no matter how the content was presented it should not be labelled 'sex-hygiene' and that it should be integrated with other collateral subjects. The value for children of this age of raising and being responsible for pets, seeing animals born on the farm, having babies in their own families, and similar experiences, was emphasized.

"When we came to the discussion of personalizing sex to the adolescent children of junior high school and high school age, there was still a greater variety in the channels of thinking. One of the group emphasized the administration difficulties from the point of view of the school, and the likelihood that programs of this sort, if much advanced over the present teaching, would not be accepted in many communities.

"Various suggestions were made as to where in the curriculum such instruction should be given. Again, it was agreed that it should not be given as 'sex hygiene'. Courses in social studies, personality development and growth, and home economics were suggested but it was pointed out that in the latter case the girls only would receive the instruction. Two other related phases of this problem were discussed. One was whether the instruction should be given in required or voluntary courses. The other hinged on the fact that in most high schools, about 75 per cent of the graduates do not go on to college and if they are to receive this instruction, and the protection against sexual mistakes which it should confer, it must be given at latest in the high school. Alternative suggestions of post-graduate courses in the high school and of adult education programs were felt to be of limited value because they reach such a small proportion of the populace. Of course the value of these courses would increase as their attendance increases.

"To be most effective from a preventive point of view, the instruction must be given before hetero-sexual experimentation begins and must be sufficiently explicit so that young people would be protected against mistakes arising through ignorance.

"Another point which was brought out was the scarcity of teachers who could be entrusted with this type of education. The suggestion was made and received general approval, that this condition should be corrected by emphasizing this side of the instruction in schools of physical education, the state normal schools and teachers colleges."

### *Some Suggestions on the Role of the Church in Guiding Youth to Wholesome Maturity*<sup>24</sup>

In the past the church played an enormous role in the restraining and socialization of the instinctual drives of youth because "the fear of supernatural sanctions was an ever-present and very real monitor in the minds of youth." The declining prestige of the Church with its supernatural sanctions for the designing of social *mores*, for the defining of individual and social values and for the controlling of conduct, has resulted in a need for accommodating church work to present social realities.

There is a real sensitiveness on the part of most churches to the needs of youth and a strong determination to encourage programs that meet these needs. Church workers are coming more and more to a recognition of the value of group techniques in church work such as are practiced by various social welfare organizations. Youth groups within the church "range all the way from an organization set up and controlled by the hierarchy, to movements completely controlled by the young people." The most impressive youth movement program, however, has not sprung from any particular denomination but from an inter-church organization called the United Christian Youth Movement representing young people in this country and Canada. Its tenets are that no church is vital in a Christian sense if it is centered in itself; that justice, love, brotherhood, tolerance must all become living realities in a local community if they are to demonstrate their validity; that the task of Christian youth is to conserve and make more contagious Christian teaching everywhere and especially to bring Christian influence to bear on the thought and conduct of young people in military and other circles.

There is a wide gap in activity and understanding between social service organizations and the churches, and both groups

24. Discussion on Church program was in charge of Rev. Howard P. Kellett, Director of Social Service, Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, assisted by Rev. George N. Marshall, Pastor, Unitarian Church, Natick, Mass.

are responsible for this. "It would be healthy for both if they were brought close together. Social work with its tremendous human needs should and could be the most realistic way of awakening the social conscience of young people."

In considering church programs for young people of all denominations, it should always be kept in mind that the goal is the development of a healthy, wholesome, responsible individual. "This can be done only through a program which meets squarely the needs of young people without too much emphasis on the past and by offering them an outlet which would give them real joy and happiness in knowing that they have a respected and recognized place in society."

Young people have more need of spiritual guidance today than ever before. This is made manifest by the extent to which, in time of war, they are returning to religious interests. If the church fails them now it will lose an opportunity which may never come again for dynamic leadership in helping to mould the character of young Americans.

## CONCLUSION

In these discussions and in this program planning, we have only begun to plow up the ground for a more fertile consideration of the problem of the shifting behavior standards of youth. An important step forward has been taken, however, by the frank recognition of the situation and its difficulties.

Parents, schools, churches, civic organizations and youth itself must come to grips with the problem in a realistic way if further progress is to be made in dealing with it.

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## HOMAGE\*

(For T.N.W., 1942)

To those who offer themselves willingly in the day of decision,  
In the great arbitrament,  
Who are prompt at the gate,  
And who present themselves foremost at the fords of Megiddo,  
And take their stations at the narrow issues:  
Theirs are the great jeopardies, the necessary role, the memorable name.  
Their encounter is with the heart of darkness.  
For some the searchings of heart, the scruple, the fastidious witness,  
For others the fateful evasion, the abiding reproaches,  
For many the frivolous and the usual occasions.  
But these on the crumbling levees match themselves with the infuriate  
flood.  
These beneath the waves toil at the primeval sea-walls.  
Whose courses were laid against chaos.  
These repair the moles erected of old against the ravining waste.  
These descend where the nethermost piers of history are building,  
And place their lives if need be at the foundation of all the ages of  
glory to come.

AMOS N. WILDER

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\*From a volume of poems, *The Healing of the Waters*, by the same author. Copyright, Harper & Brothers, 1943.